

A DAY IN COURT

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Educator Resources



Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center
P.O. Box 30048 • Lansing, MI 48909 • 517-373-7171
courts.mi.gov/learningcenter



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Purpose

Created for the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center gallery, A Day in Court can be used as preparation or follow up to tours or as a stand-alone activity. Students learn more about the judicial branch of government, especially trial courts – local courts where the overwhelming number of cases are begun and resolved.

Activities

Witness | Test your powers of observation. What did you see and hear? How does it feel to be a witness? Be sure to tell the truth.

Prosecutor/Defense Attorney | Learn about the roles of prosecuting and defense attorneys. Use witness statements and other sources to build a case.

Jury | Question people called from the community and then decide which person you think will make the best juror.

Judge | Analyze different types of questions to decide whether the attorneys are following the rules in a trial.

Court Overview | Learn more about state government, state courts, and legal careers using this research tool.

Tech Information

A Day in Court is a Unity WebGL-based experience. Unity WebGL supports all major desktop browsers to some degree. However, the level of support and the expected performance varies between different browsers.

It does not support mobile devices, including iPad.

For further details, see docs.unity3d.com/Manual/webgl-browsercompatibility.html.



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Social Studies Curriculum Connections

Grade 3 | 3 – C1.0.1, 3 – C2.0.1 , 3 – C3.0.3 , 3 – C3.0.4, 3 – C5.0.1

Grade 4 | 4 – C1.0.1 , 4 – C2.0.2 , 4 – C5.0.1 , 4 – C5.0.2

Grades 5–8 | P1.2 , P1.4 ; HS P1.5 ,

HS Civics | 5.3.6 , 5.4.1 , 5.4.2, 5.5.1 , 5.5.1, 6.2.6

Related Lessons and Resources

Michigan Court System | courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/educator-resources/curriculum/pages/michigan-court-system.aspx

Constitutions (MI/US) | courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/educator-resources/curriculum/pages/constitutions.aspx

Mock Trials and Other Simulations | courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/educator-resources/curriculum/pages/mock-trials-and-other-simulations.aspx

Tours

The Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center – a hands-on gallery within the Hall of Justice (925 West Ottawa Street, Lansing) – offers tours and events developed to engage students, grades 3 and up.

- One hour in length
- Groups up to 48, including chaperones
- Weekdays, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. (except court holidays)
- Free



To include the Michigan Supreme Court courtroom, you must request this option when making reservations. Additional time is required. Courtroom visits cannot be guaranteed due to the Court's schedule.

Call 517-373-7171 to schedule tours today!



Glossary

Case – A question settled in court.

Defense Attorney – A person who represents an accused person.*

Evidence – Information given in court to help prove the facts of a case.

Jury – A group of people who listen to all the evidence, decide the facts, and give the answer in a case, such as guilty or not guilty.

Prosecuting Attorney – The person who tries to prove that an accused person is guilty. *

Suspect – Someone thought to have committed a crime.

Witness – Someone who tells what he or she has seen, heard, or noticed.

* An attorney may also be called a lawyer. This person has earned a law degree, passed the bar exam, and is licensed to practice law within the state.



Would you like to Invite a local judge or lawyer to speak to your class? Start with these resources.

Directories

Michigan Trial Court Directory | courts.mi.gov/Self-help/Directories/Pages/trial-court-directory.aspx

Select your county and click on Location to find courts and contact information.

Affinity Bar Association Directory | www.michbar.org/file/resources/associations.pdf

Local bar associations serve lawyers from particular cities, counties, and regions. Special purpose bar associations are for specific practice areas (e.g. defense attorneys, judges, prosecutors) or are made up of specific groups of people; some have local chapters.

Prosecutor Directory | www.michiganprosecutor.org/about-us-menu/prosecutor-directory

Select a county to be directed to a local website or scroll down for contact information.

Law Schools | www.michbar.org/resources/lawschools

There are five law schools in Michigan.

Special Days

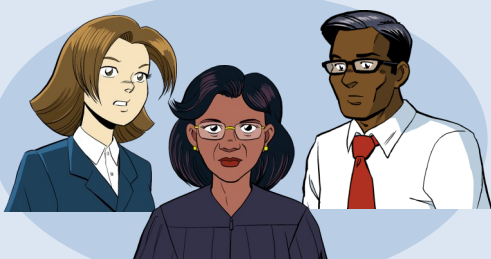
Meeting with members of the legal community can be especially meaningful on or around these dates.

Constitution Day – September 17

The U.S. Constitution was signed on this date in 1787.

Law Day – May 1

Law Day celebrates the role of law in our society and cultivates a deeper understanding of the legal profession. See lawday.org for more information.



Tips

- Contact potential guest speakers as early as possible. Court schedules are often set far in advance.
- Judges are addressed “Judge [Last Name]” or “Your Honor.” Others are typically “Mr./Ms. [Last Name].”

Support is provided in part by the Michigan State Bar Foundation and the Michigan Supreme Court Historical Society Learning Center Fund. The Michigan State Bar Foundation's funding for this project does not constitute an endorsement of any content or opinion expressed in it.

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